

Consensus Project Created to Develop National Policy Paper: “Rural/Frontier Emergency Medical Services Agenda for the Future”

Recently the National Rural Health Association (NRHA), in partnership with the National Association of State EMS Directors (NASEMSD) and the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health announced the start of a project to develop a major consensus document to serve as a guide for national policy and funding of rural and frontier emergency medical services (EMS) across the country. Called the national “Rural/Frontier EMS Agenda for the Future”, the guide will be patterned after the EMS Agenda for the Future, published by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in 1996, which has served as a visionary tool for EMS system planners across the nation.

"Rural/Frontier EMS" or "R/FEMS" is a term intended to cover EMS provided in the wilderness of woods, hills, mountains, plains and desert outside of urban/suburban centers.

Nationwide Input and Consensus Sought Through Website

The writing project will have three phases. The first phase is an information collection period from now through November 30, 2003. This is *your* opportunity (anyone involved in *any* capacity in the rural/frontier EMS or health care communities) to bring to a national level of attention your issues, barriers, best practices (actually implemented or currently contemplated), or ideas/priorities that you feel should be considered in the writing of this guide concerning the provision of EMS in rural/frontier America.

To facilitate this process, a website has been created at:

<http://www.nrharural.org/EMSagenda/>

The website contains a description of the project and instructions on how to quickly and easily submit information to the writing team. The website will also be used for public review of drafts and submission of comments on those drafts.

The Virginia Office of EMS encourages all interested parties to fully participate.

For more information, contact Eli Briggs, Policy and State Affairs Manager at NRHA at briggs@nrharural.org or Kevin K. McGinnis, Program Advisor, NASEMSD at mcginnis@nasemsd.org.